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TAGS: PTER PREL PINR CPAS KU AF
SUBJECT: AFGHAN AMBASSADOR OFFERS INFORMATION ON POSSIBLE FRAUDULENT PASSPORTS

Classified By: Political Counselor Pete O'Donohue for reasons 1.4 b and d

¶1. (S/NF) During a May 4 call on the Ambassador, Afghanistan's ambassador to Kuwait, Abdul Rahim Karimi, stated that his embassy has evidence that a series of Afghan ambassadors serving in Kuwait during the administration of Burhanuddin Rabbani (1992-1996) fraudulently delivered Afghan passports to a large number of persons, including many Arabs from a variety of countries who were interested in traveling to Afghanistan "to perform jihad". Rahim Karimi indicated that the number of such fraudulent passports could number around 11,000, noting that his embassy only has some 15,000 persons registered as Afghans resident in Kuwait, whereas GOK figures indicate that some 26,000 Afghans are resident here. Rahim Karimi said he believes the discrepancy in the figures is largely made up by passports delivered to Bidoons (stateless persons), Palestinians, Lebanese, Egyptians and others, many of whom aimed to serve extremist causes. Ambassador Karimi offered to provide Embassy -- under conditions of strictest confidentiality -- with a document providing the names of the fraudulent passport holders. We will attempt to obtain that document in the next few days. Rahim Karimi said his embassy deals on a daily basis with individuals who come seeking to renew these fraudulent passports but that these requests are routinely denied. He added that he believes fraudulent passports may have been issued in a similar fashion in other GCC countries. Rahim Karimi said he has not raised the issue with the Afghanistan MFA because, in his view, the MFA is "90% dominated by fundamentalists".

¶2. (S/NF) During his call, Rahim Karimi delivered a lengthy exegesis on Afghanistan's political troubles since the Soviet invasion, laying a considerable amount of blame on the U.S. and Pakistan for their early support of resistance groups having core elements in Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood as Waziristan's tribal areas that later manifested themselves as having a fundamentalist Islamic orientation. Rahim Karimi -- a former Afghan Justice Minister -- presented himself as an ardent advocate of a democratic system that would equitably enfold all of Afghanistan's diverse ethnic groups and, as well, a foe of foreign fundamentalists. He complimented the Obama administration on its recognition that the military option is not sufficient to restore stability to Afghanistan; a heavy dose of development is necessary as well.

¶3. (S/NF) Biographic information: Ambassador Karimi served as Afghanistan's Justice Minister (2001-2004) and speaks in familiar terms of former U.S. Ambassador Khalilzad and Lt. General Eichenberry, showing pictures of himself with both. It is not clear whether he has fallen from grace with elements in the Karzai government, which he accused of allowing "democracy" to be associated with "corruption". He was concerned that the government of Kuwait not learn of his

"undiplomatic" activity with us in sharing the fake passport information.

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